



2020 · 2025
strategy

This strategy was developed in dialogue with our global network of partners who all share Both ENDS' vision for a world where the environment is protected and human rights are respected.

COLOPHON

Both ENDS

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WHO WE ARE AND WHAT DRIVES US

Both ENDS is a human rights and environmental justice organisation. We were founded in 1986 to provide financial and political support to environmental organisations around the world that were operating in difficult, sometimes dangerous circumstances. Ever since, **we have stood in solidarity** with our partners in their efforts and struggles for justice. Their courage and perseverance inspire us and give us strength.

We see human rights and environmental justice as intertwined and inseparable. **Environmental justice** implies a fair distribution of environmental benefits and burdens, climate justice, and societies that respect human rights and planetary boundaries. More than thirty years of fighting together for environmental justice has taught us this cannot be attained without securing universal human rights and realising **gender justice**. We support movements that transform power relations so that people everywhere can demand and defend their rights, as well as participate equally and share in the benefits of political and economic processes.

We are a Dutch NGO with an international network of partners working from the grassroots up to global platforms. Our network of partner organizations from civil society all around the world is, and always has been, the starting point of our actions. They are experts in their field, they know the cultural and political landscape, they speak the local language, and they are trusted by the local communities they support. Their input and guidance lend legitimacy to our work. They realise, as much as we do, that in our globalised societies, a threat to the rights, livelihoods or environment of people anywhere is connected to the interests of everyone, everywhere.

We work together based on the principle of **equity**. We believe in bottom-up and inclusive change that empowers marginalised groups, women and girls, indigenous peoples and youth. This change can only be achieved by an inclusive civil society movement. We believe that the strength of global civil society is greater than the sum of its parts. We are convinced of the value of bringing civil society actors and other stakeholders together for sharing, promoting mutual understanding and engaging in collective action. In other words, we believe in **connecting people for change**.

THE CHANGE WE WANT

OUR VISION

Both ENDS envisions a world where human rights are respected, gender justice is realised, and the environment is fostered and protected, thus assuring a life in dignity and prosperity for all, now and in the future.

OUR MISSION

Both ENDS strengthens civil society globally to gain critical influence over decisions and activities that affect people's rights and the environment, thus guaranteeing that society fosters and protects ecosystems while ensuring respect for all human rights, including the right to water, food and a safe living environment.

OUR ROAD TO IMPACT

For our vision to become the future reality, significant changes are needed and many actors must work together. Our mission is designed to contribute to this transformative impact. This is our theory of how Both ENDS' actions will accomplish this ambitious mission:

WORKING WITH CIVIL SOCIETY

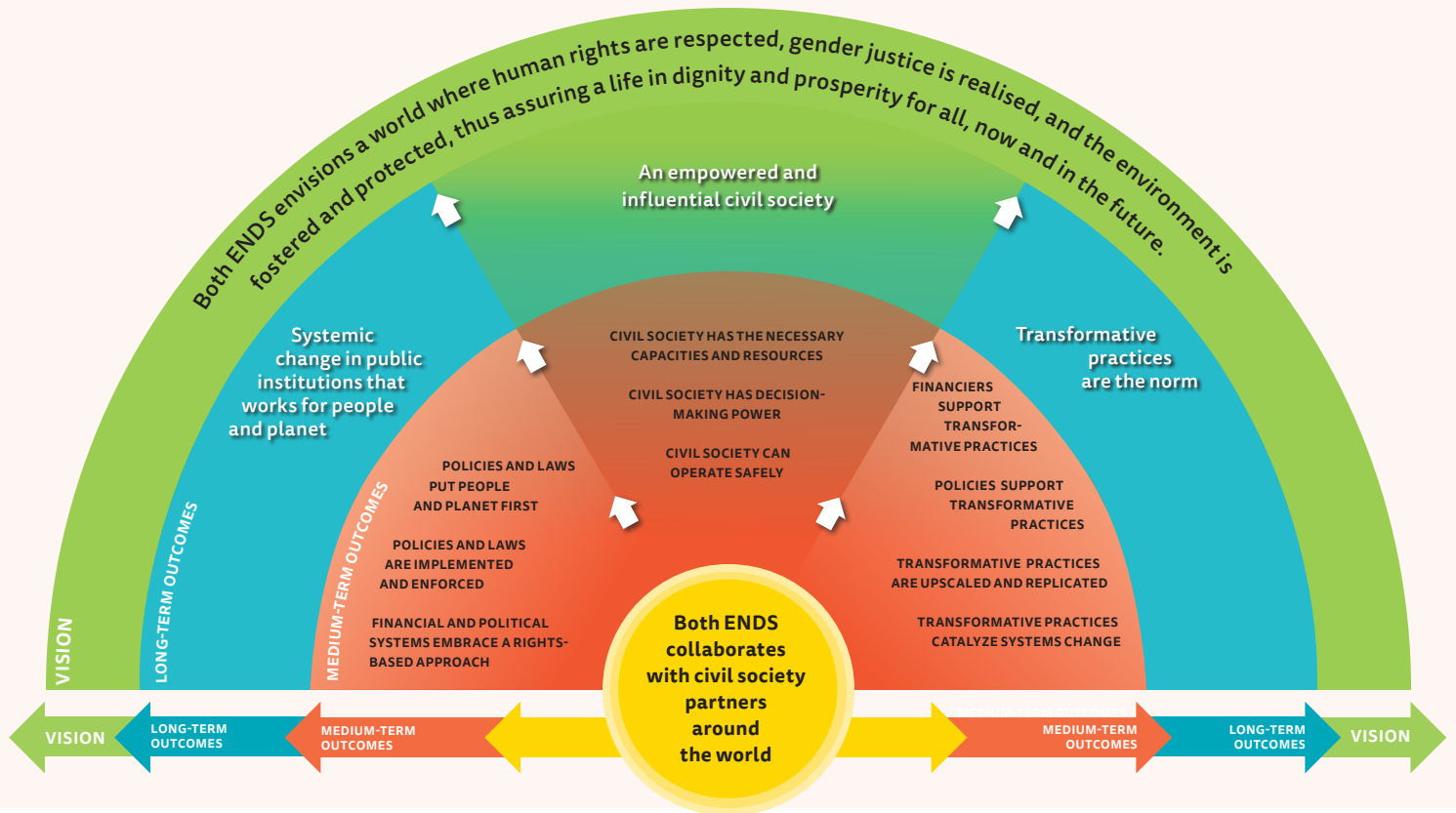
Building strong, trusting and mutual partnerships with organisations around the world is crucial to realising our vision. **Our top priority** is enabling and empowering civil society organisations (**CSOs**), especially in those countries most affected by global inequalities, to pursue the structural changes needed in their context and to amplify the voices of the communities they serve. We support civic actors from these countries to speak out in the face of injustice and inequality.

Our global partner network is the touchstone of everything we do. It plays a vital role in identifying, developing and implementing innovations that ensure the agency of local communities in decisions that affect their lives, livelihoods and the fair management of natural ecosystems. From all corners of the world, our global network calls attention to policies, decisions and investments that are inconsistent with the best interests of people and planet.

By collaborating with civic actors, we can reach shared global goals like forest and water conservation and thereby help mitigate climate change. For example, indigenous peoples and forest communities all over the world have proven to be the best protectors and managers of forest landscapes. We support their organisations so they can continue to protect and defend their forests. We also enable them to make their voices heard at policy platforms, like the EU, UNCCD, CBD, and ASEAN, or in grievance mechanisms of development banks or industry bodies. Through this support and cooperation, we contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as to a more environmentally and socially just world.

OUR PATHWAYS TO CHANGE

Both ENDS works with civil society partners along three strategic pathways that together lay the foundation for our vision to become reality. These pathways influence, strengthen and reinforce each other.



1. AN EMPOWERED AND INFLUENTIAL CIVIL SOCIETY

Our goal is that civil society can work openly and safely, make their voices heard and influence decision-making on ecosystem challenges and matters of environmental justice and human rights. A strong civil society is indispensable to a healthy society. It checks the power of both state and corporate actors, holds decision-makers accountable, and defends the rights of those marginalised from positions of influence. A strong and independent civil society can advocate for fair and ecologically responsible policies as well as challenge structural inequalities in decision-making. It can also use accountability mechanisms to seek redress for the negative consequences of such inequitable decision-making, and instead promote, implement and upscale transformative practices.

Both ENDS has long-standing experience in jointly influencing decision-making. For example, in Indonesia, the Philippines and Brazil, we work with fisheries communities and organisations representing city dwellers. We help them influence decision-making processes over large-scale land reclamation and urban and port development projects in Jakarta Bay, Manila Bay and Suape, which all directly impact

on their environment and livelihoods.

To be active, **there must be safe, enabling and inclusive civic space for organisations to operate freely and independently.** Together with our partners, we engage with governments and Dutch embassies to protect and promote civic space. Where civic space is shrinking, we collaborate with civil society actors to create alternative podiums for their messages and safe ways to amplify their voices. We ensure that response mechanisms are in place in cases of security risks and safety threats.

To be effective, **civil society needs access to and influence over decision-making processes.** Starting from the spheres of influence of our partners and our own organisation, we coordinate our actions to maximize the presence and agency of civil society at national and international fora and in decision-making processes. By connecting a diversity of civic actors from the grassroots to the global level, we maximize the influence of our collective action.

To be successful, **civil society actors need capacities, resources, networks and opportunities.** Both ENDS gives special attention to women's rights, indigenous people and youth-led organisations and movements, and their

priorities. Our support includes facilitating access to financial resources and expertise, networking and alliance building. Together, we create spaces to profile leadership by women, indigenous peoples, youth and other civic actors, focusing on those who live and work in countries most affected by global inequalities. For this purpose, for instance, we helped establish a small grants facility in eight countries. Small grants are a targeted mechanism to build the capacity of local organisations to fight for control over land, for clean water, or a healthy living environment. We see the effectiveness of such small grants, which, if in the right hands, has proven to provide the flexible funding needed to achieve remarkable impacts. Women's groups from Central America for example filed the first-ever official complaint challenging an international financial institution over its gender policy. Women's groups that are part of a global movement denouncing the impacts of large-scale mining are campaigning for their right to say 'No!' to mining companies that pollute their air, land and water. They demand that such companies are held to account and respect their rights. Many small-scale women-led initiatives together are becoming a force to be reckoned with.

2. SYSTEMIC CHANGE IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS THAT PRIORITISES PEOPLE AND PLANET

Our goal is to achieve systemic change at all levels of social, political and economic institutions, to ensure that these unconditionally respect human rights and planetary boundaries. This requires policy coherence and consistent decision-making across all sectors - from trade, finance and energy to food production, agriculture, climate action and water management - and across all sections of society - from individual to family, farm, neighbourhood, city, province and national levels.

Where existing policies and laws are not sufficient, new binding requirements that prioritise the integrity of people and planet must be enacted. We work together with CSO partners and other strategic allies to lobby and advocate for new laws and policies, to influence national and international agendas, and to counter the chilling effect of excessive corporate power on democratic processes.

Where effective policies and laws already exist, they must be implemented and enforced with firm, unavoidable consequences for governments and companies that do

not comply. Together with our partners, we advocate for the implementation and enforcement of existing policies at local, national and international levels. We support those impacted by non-compliance with such policies, to raise their grievances and seek remedy. We advocate for national and international institutions (including governments, banks, pension funds and export credit agencies) to enforce strong accountability mechanisms with robust environmental, social and gender safeguards. For example, India's Forest Rights Act is favourable to indigenous peoples when it comes to gaining ownership rights over their communal land. However, most local government agencies were not aware of this Act. Local civic actors supported by Both ENDS informed thousands of people of their rights and successfully supported several local communities to go through the lengthy process of applying for their land titles. Consequently, forest-based indigenous communities applied en masse for legal ownership of their lands. Meanwhile, our partners ensure that governments are held accountable when they refuse to implement the Forest Rights Act, or where this is hampered by ignorance or corruption.

The structural and obstinate bias of financial, economic and political systems towards growth at all costs must be replaced by a rights-based approach to prosperity that respects planetary boundaries. The climate crisis urges global society to stop fossil fuel investments, quickly transition away from emission-heavy industries and lifestyles, and shift political and economic priority to sustainable alternatives. Together with our partners, we challenge the unsustainable aspects of the prevailing development paradigm. We promote the use of accountability and judicial mechanisms to ensure that public development institutions uphold human rights and ecological values as fundamental norms. In parallel, we develop proposals for structural changes in policies, financial systems and development agendas that prioritise people and planet over corporate profits. An example is our involvement in the fossil fuel divestment movement. We want the Dutch pension funds to acknowledge climate-related risks and opportunities and to adopt divest-invest policies to manage these risks and to support emerging climate-friendly alternatives to a fossil fuel based economy.

3. TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICES ARE THE NORM

Our goal is a massive upscaling and mainstreaming of bottom-up, planet-friendly practices, supported by favourable governance systems and availability of financial resources. There are many examples of successful community-led livelihood models based on collective participation, healthy ecosystems, gender justice and a vision of wellbeing beyond individual wealth. Approaches such as Regreening focus on ecosystem restoration led by forest communities or local farmers in the Sahel. These initiatives recognise and respect the interdependence between human prosperity and healthy ecosystems. They help to empower women, youth and other groups that often lack access to decision-making processes and tend to be excluded from land, water and forest management to assert their agency and rights to self-determination.

To achieve this goal, **there needs to be financial and policy support for community-led initiatives.** Together with our partners, we advocate for such supportive policies and financial resources at local, national and international levels, using the evidence and first-hand knowledge we gather about effective and inspiring initiatives in different parts of the world.

Local actors must be enabled to upscale and replicate their practices. Both ENDS and partners support local actors in these efforts by linking them up with each other, conducting joint fundraising, communicating successes and providing the space to develop leadership skills to local communities, indigenous peoples, women-led groups, youth movements and others. For over 20 years, Both ENDS has been instrumental in co-founding and upscaling regional and global networks of CSOs that work on locally-managed forest ecosystems and land restoration. Examples include the Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Program working in six Asian countries, the International Analog Forestry Network in 20 countries on five continents, and the Drynet network in thirteen dryland areas globally. Through these networks, countless people have been reached and thousands of hectares of land are being conserved and restored. Both ENDS has built up extensive experience supporting and facilitating the growth and success of these networks and is strategically positioned for policy advocacy, fundraising and upscaling.

To mainstream these concrete and feasible approaches and the norms they promote, they must be **integrated in a broader narrative of transformative change** that takes environmental sustainability, human rights and gender justice as the starting point. We work with our partners to elaborate this narrative and make the case for the transition to new social and economic models in every forum where we have a voice. Both ENDS continues to influence political, financial and civil society stakeholders to create policies, governance structures and financial systems that promote the values, perspectives and practices of bottom-up movements and their perception of the relationship between human society and nature.

PREPARED AND OPTIMISTIC FOR THE RIDE AHEAD

Achieving transformative change in the current era of climate crisis and mounting pressures on democratic systems poses considerable challenges. These challenges must be confronted to be able to recognise new opportunities and respond effectively.

The world is changing fast. Both ENDS does not limit its work to specific countries or themes. An open view allows us to respond quickly to opportunities as they arise. We choose these opportunities based on the experience and expertise built up during more than thirty years of working with communities and activists around the world and our joint track record of successes. Often, we receive specific requests for support and action from our civil society partners. They trust us and rely on our bird's eye view to make informed choices and initiate action.

CONFRONTING A DAUNTING REALITY

Major structural changes are needed before 2025 to avoid reaching a tipping point, where global environmental breakdown, escalating global inequality, large-scale

biodiversity loss and unprecedented food and water insecurity can no longer be reversed. Finding solutions for these four immense challenges is made harder by four current global trends: the rise of populism and nationalism, the diminishing ability of multilateral institutions to respond adequately to global problems, the unprecedented corporate power in political processes, and the shrinking civic space. Together, these four trends work to prevent progress towards paradigms that prioritise human dignity, gender justice and a healthy planet.

GALVANIZING HOPE AND MOBILISING RESISTANCE

Fortunately, there are also plenty reasons to be optimistic. The climate crisis presents new opportunities to advance alternative economic and development paradigms as well as to advocate for bottom-up, ecologically sound perspectives on prosperity and wellbeing. This crisis justifies transformative system change towards political and economic structures that prioritise universal human dignity and respect for planetary boundaries.

The Sustainable Development Goals form another opportunity to ensure policy coherence at national and

international levels and tackle challenges in the field of environment, climate, human rights and gender in an integrated way.

Meanwhile, the restrictions imposed by populist agendas and the pervasiveness of corporate power have triggered the development of new tools, innovative response measures, unlikely partnerships and deeper collaboration within civil society. The global trends against people and planet are galvanizing civil society in new and stronger movements of solidarity. New audiences are creating spaces for different and more inclusive perspectives coming from women, indigenous and youth leaders.

Both ENDS is wonderfully positioned to facilitate this mobilization of new alliances and leadership. We are committed to support and empower the emerging civil society movement, which wants nothing short from collective, transformative change, through our global network of partners and strategic allies.

Connecting people for change has never been so important.



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